



## ***United States Attorney District of New Jersey***

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### **TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION SCREENING OFFICER CHARGED WITH STEALING FROM PASSENGER AND MAKING FALSE STATEMENTS**

NEWARK, N.J. – A Lead Transportation Security Officer, employed by the Transportation Security Administration (“TSA”) and currently suspended from his employment at Newark Liberty International Airport, appeared this afternoon before United States Magistrate Judge Esther Salas on charges of stealing money from the purse of passenger as her belongings passed through a screening device, and then making false statements to investigators once the theft was discovered, U.S. Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Leroy Ray, 44, of Newark, New Jersey, surrendered Tuesday to United States Marshals. He was released on bail following this afternoon’s proceeding.

According to documents filed and statements made in federal court:

On February 3, 2010, a female passenger passed through the security screening process at Newark Liberty International Airport. After the passenger’s belongings went through the x-ray machine, Ray pulled the tray from the machine to search it at another table.

After Ray found a white object in the victim’s bag, he took his gloves off and held them in one hand. Once the victim retrieved her personal property and proceeded towards her departure gate, Ray moved away from the checkpoint and placed the gloves in a pocket of his pants. After throwing the gloves away, Ray continued touching the pocket, in which an object was visible, numerous times.

Several minutes later, the victim returned and indicated she was missing an envelope containing approximately \$300 in cash, as well as approximately \$195 in cash from inside a zippered pocket of her bag.

Shortly thereafter, Ray abruptly began walking quickly away from the location where he was working. He went into his supervisor’s office, pulled his left hand out of his pocket, and placed a white object in a “lost and found” tray.

Ray then returned to the area around the check point. Several officials had gathered around the victim, to begin investigating her complaint regarding the missing money. Without being asked, and without being told that the victim was missing anything, Ray stated to these other officials that – in sum and substance – he remembered the victim, he knew what she had

left behind, and that he had found an envelope on the floor and had recovered it. An official retrieved a white envelope from the “lost and found” tray in the supervisor’s office. The envelope contained approximately \$300, which the victim identified as hers.

If convicted, Ray faces a maximum potential penalty of one year in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000 on the embezzlement charge, and a maximum potential penalty of five years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000 on the false statement charge.

In determining an actual sentence, the judge to whom the case is assigned would, upon a conviction, consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant’s criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited the TSA for the work leading to the identification and apprehension of the defendant.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Zach Intrater of the U.S. Attorney’s Office Criminal Division in Newark.

The charges and allegations contained in the Complaint are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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Defense counsel: Brian Hill, Esq., Jersey City, New Jersey